



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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Chapter:	E	Runaways	3-15-2010
Subchapter:	1	Interstate Runaways	
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This subsection is about children who are residents of New Jersey and who run away and are located in another state. For policy and procedures concerning out-of-state residents who run away and are located in New Jersey, see [CP&P-VIII-E-1-200](#). For policy and procedures about New Jersey children who run away within the boundaries of New Jersey, see [CP&P-VIII-E-2-100](#).

Definitions 11-25-92

A runaway is a child who comes to the attention of CP&P as having voluntarily left his place of residence without the consent of his parent, guardian, or agency responsible for his care.

A New Jersey child is a child under the age of 18 whose principal place of residence is in New Jersey.

Residence refers to that place where a home is maintained by the child's parent, guardian, person or agency entitled to legal custody of the child.

A stranded child is a child unaccompanied by an adult, but not believed to be a runaway. Stranded children may receive services as runaway children, or if in need of protection, they may be considered abandoned and receive services as described in Volume II.

Runaways and the Law 11-25-92

Running away is not a criminal offense in New Jersey; however, a runaway may already be known to or may come to the attention of a law enforcement agency or the court either in New Jersey or the state in which he is located. For the purposes of this policy, the following are legal statuses as they pertain to runaways:

Escapee	a child who has run away from a correctional institution to which he has
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	been committed by law
Absconder	a child who has run away while on probation or parole supervision.
Delinquent	a child who has run away and has been adjudicated a delinquent. The child may be considered delinquent by New Jersey and/or by the state in which he is located.
Juvenile	Family Crisis (and its equivalent in other states) – a child who has run away and has been adjudicated a juvenile in need of supervision.
Non-delinquent	a child who has run away but has not been adjudicated delinquent or Juvenile - Family Crisis and has no standing complaints against him in either New Jersey or the state in which his is located.

A child who runs away from a shelter or CP&P contracted residential facility is not considered an escapee.

Interstate Compact on Juveniles 11-25-92

New Jersey is a member of the Interstate Compact on Juveniles (N.J.S.A. 9:23-1 et. seq.), along with the other 49 states, the District of Columbia and Guam. The Compact establishes the guidelines to follow with regard to each of the following:

- the return of non-delinquent runaways to their home state;
- the return of delinquent juveniles who have escaped or absconded to the state from which they fled;
- the provision of out-of-state supervision of delinquent children as outlined in Children In Conflict with the Law, [CP&P-VIII-F-2-200](#); and
- the authorization of agreements for the institutionalization of juveniles who need special care and treatment not available in the home state.

The policy of the members of the Compact is to cooperate with each other and to observe their respective responsibilities for the prompt and safe return and to accept non-delinquent and delinquent juveniles who become subject to the provisions of this Compact. See [CP&P-VIII-D-3-600](#) for the text of the Compact.

In each state, a Compact Administrator is appointed to administer the Compact. In New Jersey, the Compact is administered by three departments:

- the Administrative Office of the Courts is responsible for runaways who are on probation;
- the Bureau of Parole, Department of Corrections, is responsible for runaways who are on parole or escapees; and
- the Department of Children and Families, CP&P is responsible for non-delinquent runaways.

Under the rules of the Compact, a runaway may voluntarily consent to being returned to his state of residence, using Form III, Consent for Voluntary Return by Runaway, Escapee or Absconder. See Volume X, Forms. The form is available from the County Probation Department and used for a runaway child who is in conflict with the law as well as a non-delinquent runaway who voluntarily consents to return home.

When the runaway will not return voluntarily to the home state, the return may be requisitioned by the parent, guardian, person or agency entitled to legal custody of the juvenile. The process of requisitioning the child's return is coordinated by the courts and Compact Administrators of New Jersey and the other state involved.

Role of Interstate Services Unit 11-25-92

The Interstate Services Unit has been assigned the responsibility of acting as liaison to the Compact Administrators of the other states party to the Interstate Compact on Juveniles when CP&P is involved with the return of a non-delinquent runaway.

When a non-delinquent runaway determined to be a New Jersey resident is located in another state, the other state Compact Administrator notifies Interstate Services Unit. Interstate Services Unit contacts the appropriate Local Office and provides the information which the other state has obtained regarding the runaway. The Local Office makes arrangements directly with the appropriate agency in the other state for the return of the child.

Interstate Services Unit acts as liaison with the Compact Administrator of the other state in resolving any problems related to the return of the runaway.

Responsibility for the Return of an Escapee or Absconder 11-25-92

When a New Jersey child escapes from institutional custody or absconds while on parole or probation, responsibility for arranging and paying for the child's return rests with the Bureau of Parole or the appropriate County Probation Department.

Whenever CP&P receives a request to arrange or pay for the return of an escapee or absconder, CP&P refers the request to the Bureau of Parole or the County Probation Department. No additional CP&P activities are necessary.

Responsibility for the Return of a Delinquent or Juvenile-Family Crisis Child 11-25-92

The Probation Department is responsible for arranging and paying for the return of a runaway who is adjudicated delinquent or who is a Juvenile-Family Crisis child. If the child was under CP&P supervision at the time he ran away, CP&P assists the Probation Department as needed to return the child to New Jersey.

Responsibility for the Return of a Non-Delinquent Runaway 11-25-92

CP&P is responsible for assisting in the return of non-delinquent New Jersey runaways who are located in another state. The extent of CP&P involvement and the degree of responsibility which CP&P assumes in returning a child varies.

In determining the extent of CP&P involvement and the degree of responsibility, the following factors are considered:

- whether the parent/guardian of the runaway child is willing and able to arrange and/or pay for the child's return;
- whether the child is under the supervision of a New Jersey social service agency other than CP&P;
- whether the child ran away from a group home or residential facility; and
- whether the child is under CP&P supervision.

Parental Responsibility 11-25-92

If the child is unknown to CP&P or was under CP&P supervision while residing in his parent's home prior to running away, the parent is considered to be primarily responsible for arranging and/or paying for the return of the child. See below regarding contacts with the parent.

Other Social Service Agency Responsibility 11-25-92

If the child is under the supervision of a New Jersey social service agency other than CP&P, the Local Office requests that agency's involvement in arranging and/or paying for the child's return.

Group/Residential Facility Responsibility 11-25-92

If a child not under CP&P supervision runs away from a group home or residential facility to another state the responsibility for arranging and paying for the child's return rests with the particular facility. CP&P coordinates efforts to return the child and becomes involved to whatever extent is necessary to affect the child's return.

If the child is under CP&P supervision and has run away from a contracted group home or residential facility, the Local Office who is responsible for supervision of the child affects the child's return in cooperation with the group home or residential facility. Payment to a contracted facility may continue for up to two weeks when the conditions in [CP&P-IV-E-3-300](#) are met.

See [CP&P-VIII-D-3-800](#) regarding the method of payment for the return of the child.

CP&P Responsibility 11-25-92

When the various factors involved in determining the extent of CP&P involvement and the degree of responsibility have been considered, the responsible Local Office is established per [CP&P-II-C-1-200](#).

Contact with the Child's Parent 11-25-92

When CP&P assumes responsibility for the return to New Jersey of an interstate runaway, the child's parent is contacted to notify him that the child has been found and to determine:

- why the child ran away;
- whether returning the child home is an appropriate plan;
- what CP&P services, if any, are necessary; and
- whether the parent will transport the child and/or pay for the child's return.

If the child is not already under the supervision of CP&P, and the parent will make full arrangements for the child's return, CP&P involvement may be limited to coordinating interstate activities. When the child is returned to New Jersey, complete and process a Screening Summary, DCF Form [1-1](#), in NJS as "Information and Referral" if no further involvement or action is required by CP&P.

If the parent is unwilling to be responsible for his child's return and is unwilling to authorize CP&P services, a court order is sought to authorize services.

When CP&P services are needed or requested on behalf of a New Jersey child who has been located in another state, a Family Summary/Case Plan, CP&P Form [26-81](#), is completed and signed by the parent. See Registering the Case of a Runaway below regarding opening the case of a runaway.

If the child has run away from a CP&P supported placement, the parent is advised and notified that the child has been located.

Payment for the Child's Return 11-25-92

When CP&P is informed that a New Jersey runaway child has been located, a determination of responsibility and the mechanism for paying for the child's return to New Jersey is based on the child's living arrangement at the time he ran away and whether or not the child is under the supervision of CP&P.

CP&P pays for the child's return to New Jersey only when all other resources have been explored and no other source of funding is available.

The parent, guardian, individual, or agency responsible for the child's care is contacted and that party's ability and willingness to pay for the child's return is determined. The parent is responsible for paying for the child's return to New Jersey, but when he cannot pay and no other individual or agency will assume financial responsibility, CP&P may pay based on the chart in [CP&P-VIII-D-3-800](#).

The parent is expected to reimburse CP&P for expenditures made on behalf of the runaway child in accordance with CP&P support procedures. See [CP&P-IX-F-1-225](#). If the child ran away from a CP&P placement, the parent is not expected to reimburse CP&P for costs related to the child's return.

When a Request for Travel Authorization, Form is used as a secondary payment mechanism, a notation on the form or a memo is attached to it stating that the primary method of payment was pursued and was found unable to pay.

CP&P may use the Local Office Bank Account only during non-working hours to arrange for the return of a child. The check is made payable to the vendor. See [CP&P-IX-F-1-300](#) regarding the Local Office Bank Account.

Registering the Case of a Runaway 11-25-92

A case is registered on a child who has run from New Jersey to another state when services beyond screening and assessment or payment required. When services beyond screening and assessment or payment are not required, complete DCF Form [1-1](#), Screening Summary, and process as Information and Referral.

Services Following the Child's Return 11-25-92

When the runaway child is returned to New Jersey, a case may be opened as indicated above. When the child is returned to New Jersey, a follow-up visit is recommended to determine whether any additional CP&P services are necessary. Services may be provided to the family based on a determined need and the parent's willingness and eligibility for services. Initial service provision following the child's return to New Jersey

directed toward keeping the family unit together and preventing subsequent runaway incidents.

If the child was under CP&P supervision at the time he ran away, services may continue to be provided as long as:

- a determined need for services exists;
- service provision is based on a well-defined case plan; and
- the parent is willing for services to continue, or a court order is obtained authorizing CP&P involvement.

Court Order or Consent Required to Authorize Placement 2-6-2006

Temporary placement may be requested or required on behalf of an interstate runaway when he is returned to New Jersey. When temporary placement is the plan, a case is opened and all required pre-placement activities are completed.

CP&P pursues a court order to authorize placing the child. If placement will be in a residential treatment center (i.e., congregate care), CP&P may accept written parental consent, when appropriate. Use a residential placement agreement, CP&P Form [25-59](#).

CASE TERMINATION 3-15-2010

When case goal achieved -- If a case is opened on a New Jersey runaway who is located in another state and returned to New Jersey, the case is terminated when all case goals are achieved or when the adolescent reaches the age of 21, if he or she is in out-of-home placement, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 30:4C-2.3.

Cases are required to remain open until adolescents in out-of-home placement reach the age of 21 to assist the individual to become an independent and productive adult, as long as it is in the individual's best interest. Cases are closed on adolescents in placement between the ages of 18 and 21 only if:

- Services are refused by the youth or
- The youth requests that his or her case be closed.

Adolescents who have reached the age of majority (18), are living in their own homes and need continued services to assist with a successful transition to adulthood, are referred to other agencies for continued assistance. See [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#).

Runaway still missing after six months -- When a child under CP&P supervision runs away and is not located within six months, consult with the DAG to determine whether it is appropriate to seek court intervention (including an order to investigate, an order for

custody, or request that a warrant for interference with custody be issued). If no court intervention is necessary, the case is terminated. Efforts to locate the child are documented in the electronic case record. Efforts include but are not limited to:

- Contact the police department,
- Contact Probation or Parole, if appropriate
- Contact relatives and friends.

Written notification of the termination of the case is sent to all involved persons, agencies and courts.

Court approval required -- If a standing court order is applicable to the child, prior approval of the court is necessary for termination.

Guardianship cases -- When a child sixteen years or older under guardianship of CP&P remains missing for six months, a recommendation for discharge of the child from guardianship may be made by the Local Office (LO) Manager. If it is decided that the case should remain open, efforts to locate the child must be renewed every three months until at least one of the following conditions exists:

- The child is located.
- The child reaches age 18. See [CP&P-V-A-3-500](#), Medicaid Extension for Young Adults (MEYA), Also Known as Chafee Medicaid, regarding eligibility for extended Medicaid coverage.
- A decision is reached to recommend discharge from guardianship.

Documentation -- All efforts to locate the missing child are documented in the case record. See [CP&P-III-C-4-100](#) , [CP&P-III-C-8-100](#), [CP&P-VIII-E-2-100](#), and [CP&P-VIII-F-1-600](#).

Child in CP&P Custody runs away -- When a child in CP&P custody runs away from any out-of-home placement, the CP&P Worker documents the status of the child in NJ SPIRIT in the Person Management and Placement and Service End Windows. See the chart below for the Person Management Window:

Go to Person Management Window >	Click Address Tab
Look for the most recent open/closed primary residence address >	Click Edit

Enter the date the child/family member(s) "ran away" or went "missing" in the end date field >	Save and Close
Click Insert >	Select "Primary Residence" address type
Enter a new date in the entry date field of the "runaway" or "missing" status>	Enter "missing or "runaway" in the C/O field
Save and Close	

To end the placement because the child ran away, click the placement end reason, "Child ran away less than 6 months." To discharge or end the episode of the child in runaway status, select "Child in runaway status over 6 months."

For a child who runs away from placement, click here to view the NJ SPIRIT Cheat Sheet, "Document a Child in Runaway Status."

Procedures Related to the Return of a Runaway New Jersey Child Who is Located in Another State 11-25-92

RESPONSIBILITY	ACTION REQUIRED
Interstate Services Unit	1. Receive and review a referral from an out-of-state Compact Administrator that a New Jersey child has been located in another state.
	2. Determine the legal status of the child and agency responsible for the child's return to New Jersey.
	3. Refer the out-of-state agency to the appropriate New Jersey agency or notify the appropriate CP&P Local Office.
Worker	4. Notify the child's parent that the child has been located.
	5. Determine the parent's ability and willingness to arrange and pay for the

	child's return.
	6. Assess the need and appropriateness of CP&P involvement, and complete a Family Summary/Case Plan, CP&P Form 26-81 .
	7. Make travel and payment arrangements for the return of the child directly with the out-of-state agency, when appropriate.
	8. Request for Transfer Authorization, PB 141. Complete form or use the LO Bank Account, when appropriate.
	9. Register the child as a "case" in NJS whenever payment or services beyond screening and assessment are necessary.
	10. Obtain authority for placement when appropriate.
	11. Provide services as needed upon the child's return to New Jersey.
	12. Terminate supervision when appropriate.